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## EDITOR:

B. W. PALMER, A. M., M. D.

## COLLABORATORS:

PRACTICAL PHARMACY:—LEON C. FINK; P. F. SCHUMANN; W. H. STONE, Ph. B.  
CHEMISTRY:—C. P. BROOKWICH; DR. JNO. M. FRANCOIS; J. B. NAGELVOORT;  
F. A. THOMPSON, Ph. C.

BOTANY AND MATERIA MEDICA:—H. H. BERRY, M. D.; G. SUTTIE, M. D., Ph. C.  
PHARMACEUTICAL APPARATUS AND INVENTIONS:—J. B. RUSSELL, Ph. G.

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## IRA REMSEN.

The subject of this sketch was born in New York City in 1846. In 1854 the family moved to the country (Rockland County, N. Y.) on account of Mrs. Remsen's health, and there Ira lived and attended school for three years. His education was continued in the public schools of New York City, from 1857 (when the family renounced rural life) till 1860, when he entered what was then the Free Academy, now the College of the City of New York. Remaining there until 1863, he then left to study medicine. Received the degree of Doctor of Medicine from the College of Physicians and Surgeons, New York, in 1867, having spent a year (from June, 1865, to June, 1866) in Europe in general study. After graduating in medicine he decided at once to give up that profession, for which he had little taste, and to pursue the study of chemistry, which was very much more to his liking. He went to Munich in 1867 (being then 21 years of age), in the hope of being able to work with the great Liebig. But Liebig at that time did not receive students in his laboratory. He therefore entered the laboratory of Volhard, a nephew and former assistant of Liebig, and at the same time attended the lectures of Liebig during the year 1867–68. At the advice of Volhard, he then went to Göttingen to continue his studies under Wöhler and Fittig. He had the pleasure of meeting Wöhler in Liebig's house in Munich, and, on arriving in Göttingen, was most cordially received by the great chemist. Remained in Göttingen until the spring of 1870, when he received the degree of Ph.D.; his thesis was on "Piperic Acid and Some of its Derivatives."

At this time Professor Fittig was called to Tübingen as the successor of Strecker, and he invited the young doctor to go with him as assistant—an invitation which

reach. A small force-pump, such as is frequently used for washing windows, kept in a bucket of water, serves as a cheap and efficient fire-extinguisher, and is less likely to get out of order than more complicated apparatus.

A small alcohol blaze can easily be blown out with the breath, but a flame of dangerous size is most readily extinguished by dashing water *across* the surface of the liquid or floor. If in an open vessel, prompt closure with a loose cover will subdue the flame by cutting off the supply of air. Remember that fire cannot burn without a supply of air. Smother it if you can.

Remember that soda-fountains can be made to serve as excellent fire-extinguishers. Two men can easily carry a small fountain to a point from where its carbonated contents can be emptied onto a fire.

Hand grenades have fallen into a richly merited state of "innocuous desuetude," and little reliance should be placed upon them for extinguishing fires in drug stores.

Where fire-shutters are capable of preventing communication of fire to the premises from adjoining buildings, in the rear or at the side of the pharmacy, they should certainly be applied, and invariably closed and locked at night. Heavy shutters and doors of wood covered with block tin are considered more serviceable than iron shutters.

Fire precautions not only confer a degree of safety, but materially reduce the rate at which insurance can be secured.

Permanent paper labels on stock-containers should, so far as practicable, be kept varnished. In case of fire, great damage often results from the loss of identity of pharmaceuticals through washing off of labels by water used in extinguishing flame. Ordinary shipping tags, bearing the name of the contents, are well protected by sizing with glue and varnishing on both sides. Ordinary ink or pencil marks on unprotected labels are soon obliterated by action of damp air in a cellar.

During the excitement incidental to a fire, don't forget that the prescription records rank among your most valuable possessions. Some neighboring druggist will be willing to repeat prescriptions for you until your plant can be re-established.

While one person is engaged in an attempt to extinguish the fire, another should promptly proceed to turn in an alarm.

Escape from a burning building can often be effected by creeping on hands and knees to a window, door, or staircase. The atmosphere of a room so full of smoke as to cause suffocation of a person standing upright, can generally be safely breathed near the floor. Several folds of wet cloth, or even a damp handkerchief tied or held over the mouth and nostrils, will often enable people to pass through dense smoke.

Don't neglect to keep your stock insured.

L. C. F.

#### A NEW FAD IN THERAPEUTICS.

In the *New York Medical Journal* for Jan. 28, 1893, appeared a paper accredited to Dr. Wm. A. Hammond, entitled: "On Certain Organic Extracts, their Preparation and Physiological and Therapeutical Effects."

This paper treated upon the question of the therapeutic application of extracts of animal tissues. It was a continuation of the theories of Brown-Séquard, Bogroff, Zenetz, Bock, and Constantin Paul, and *prima facie* appeared to be a sincere and scientific effort on the part of the author; at all events, aside from any question which might have been raised by those familiar with the professional and military records of the author, it ostensibly had the indorsement of the editor of a medical journal in high standing.

Misled by the assumptions as covered by the foregoing, a manufacturing pharmaceutical house, in its desire to cater to the demands of the medical profession, commenced a series of experiments based upon the formulæ published by Dr. Hammond, and demonstrated to its own satisfaction that the operation which the author declared demanded six (or more) months to complete, could be perfected in a very much shorter period.

With no thought of trenching upon the commercial interests of anyone, the results of the investigation were announced in an advertisement placed in the various medical journals of the land, in which it was stated that one of the animal extracts above referred to, entitled "Cerebrine" (because derived from the brain of the ox), could be furnished on demand, and that the same was manufactured after the formula of Dr. Hammond, save that the process had been reduced to six days.

The publication of this advertisement drew out a correspondence with Dr. Hammond and his attorneys, which covered threats of legal penalties for alleged infringement of *trademark*, and for fraudulent intent, covered in an article based upon Dr. Hammond's formula, but which was manufactured in much less time.

Incidentally the fact was announced that these "Animal Extracts" were manufactured in the laboratory of Dr. Wm. A. Hammond, under his own supervision, and that a New York Chemical Company only was authorized to advertise and sell the same.

These facts placed the original paper in a new light, and seemed to justify the inference that it was written for a commercial purpose. Following up this inference, two more facts were developed, namely:

First: That both "Cerebrine" as prepared by Hammond, and the same article as prepared by the manufacturing house above alluded to, in the hands of reputable physicians who had experimented therewith, were *not* capable, in many cases tried, of producing the physical and therapeutical effects claimed by Hammond in his paper.

Second: That Dr. William A. Hammond is the president of, and a large stockholder in, the Chemical Company of New York above referred to.

Although the controversy at present existing between Dr. Hammond and the manufacturing pharmaceutical house before mentioned may superficially appear as possessed only of personal character, there are several points involved which merit the careful consideration of all interested in either medicine or pharmacy. Among other queries, the following naturally suggest themselves:

1. Is it a culpable act on the part of either a physician or a pharmacist to act upon the recommendations of an author, as promulgated in an alleged scientific paper, in a scientific periodical, and purporting to have its origin solely in the interests of medicine *per se*, and therapeutics in particular?

2. Is it just that a pharmacist, misled by the publication of such a paper, should be persecuted legally, or by personal attack?

3. Is it proper to lend the columns of the medical press to the dissemination of pseudo-scientific literature and thus mislead those who are accustomed to look to this source for instruction and guidance?

#### NATIONAL WHOLESALE DRUGGISTS' ASSOCIATION.

We have received the following notice of the coming meeting in this city of the National Wholesale Druggists' Association, which we gladly publish:

The Committee of Arrangements and Entertainment beg to inform the members of the National Wholesale Druggists' Association that they have selected the Hotel Cadillac as the headquarters of the Nineteenth Annual Convention, to be held in Detroit from Sept. 11th to 14th inclusive. Opening business session, 8 P.M., Monday, Sept. 11th.

The committee would suggest that members who anticipate attending the convention write at once to the Cadillac, the Russell House, or the Hotel St. Claire, stating just what they require in the shape of accommodations. While the Cadillac, which is a most excellent hotel, has been selected as the headquarters of the convention, the Russell House and Hotel St. Claire are both prepared to take care of any guests who may come their way, and assure the committee of the very best of service. The Cadillac and Russell House are both conducted upon the American plan, and the St. Claire, which is entirely new, upon the European plan.

The committee wish to remind the members that Detroit is a place naturally adapted for entertainment. With its beautiful avenues and boulevards, its magnificent river connecting Lake Erie with Lake St. Clair, and its Island Park, which has no equal on this continent, it can offer to our members a form of entertainment which can only be obtained by a visit to the City of the Straits. This fact, coupled with the very important business which is to come before the meeting, will, we trust, bring the largest attendance in the history of the Association.

*Hotel Rates.*—Cadillac, American plan, \$3.00 to \$5.00 per day; Russell House, American plan, \$3.00 to \$4.50 per day; St. Claire, European plan, \$1.50 to \$3.50 per day.

*Officers.*—James E. Davis, Detroit, President; A. B. Merriam, Minneapolis, Secretary; S. M. Strong, Cleveland, Treasurer.

*Committee of Arrangements and Entertainment.*—Alanson S. Brooks, chairman; Frederick B. Perry, Thomas P. Cook, William M. Warren, Frank S. Hubbard.

For the Committee,

ALANSON S. BROOKS,  
Chairman.

Detroit, Mich, July 18, 1893.

#### A MODERN INSTANCE.

*"The mills of God grind slowly, but they grind exceeding small."*

Empires rise, gathering the strength of hoary centuries, and sink into nothingness like the Alpine avalanche. Mountains rear to heaven their bold and blackened cliffs, and bow their tall heads to the plain. Human nature is likewise subject to degeneration and decay.

History repeats itself, and all past experience has shown that when an individual assumes infallibility he paves the way to an inglorious fall into well merited oblivion.

The mental decadence of Wm. A. Hammond must be evident to anyone who has noticed his descent from a claimed scientist to the level of appropriating the ideas of others and claiming original discovery of them.

It might naturally be supposed that one who writes himself "Surgeon-General (Retired List)" would be sufficiently familiar with chemical and pharmaceutical processes to at least avoid a solecism, but such appears to be far from the fact.

When the oily Hammond declares it requires six months' (or more) maceration of brain substance for the manufacture of "Cerebrine" (so-called), and eight months to extract the virtues of the heart muscle, adding that he has found a year much better, we are bound to believe these statements have a commercial rather than a scientific basis.

The merest tyro in medicine or pharmacy, possessed of a modicum of common sense, would naturally imagine that the manipulation of organic matter should be completed with the utmost possible dispatch, in order to avoid putrescence and the consequent formation of septic principles; but this is a question which Hammond does not appear to consider worthy of thought. Is it possible he is not aware of the dangers of septicism? Or is it that he evinces in his paper the same disregard for human life and suffering that characterized his actions during the late civil war, and which led to his court-martial and subsequent retirement owing to disgraceful dismissal promulgated by no less a person than Abraham Lincoln?

As a matter of fact, microscopic examination of so-called "Organic Extracts" reveals the presence of bacteria; and cultures, moreover, evidence that these bacteria, many of them at least, are of a septic character.

But what else could be expected of preparations which are so unchemical and unpharmaceutical as to have floating therein shreds of epithelial matter, to say